DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 856 IR 054 048

AUTHOR Cleyle, Susan E.
TITLE Bridging the Distance with UREAD Off-Campus Library Services and U.READ: Alternatives to On-Site Bibliographic Instruction.
PUB DATE Oct 91
NOTE 21p.; Papers presented at the Quality in Off-Campus Programs Conference (Ft. Lauderdale, FL, October 1991) and the Off-Campus Library Services Conference (Albuquerque, NM, October 1991).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bibliographies; College Libraries; *Distance Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Information Seeking; Library Guides; *Library Instruction; *Library Services; Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS *University of Regina SK

ABSTRACT

The first of two papers describing the University of Regina Education At a Distance (UREAD) off-campus library service focuses on the implementation of the program at the University of Regina (in Saskachewan, Canada) with relation to the issues that would be of concern to other institutions considering developing an off-campus service. Information obtained from a literature review on how other libraries have implemented their individual programs is briefly reported, and the process of defining the client and service base is described. The services to be offered by UREAD in response to its mandate--to make off-campus library services as equal as possible to services offered on-campus--are listed; they are: (1) specific books and documents; (2) photocopies of periodical articles; (3) thematic/subject searches; (4) responding to reference/information queries; (5) computerized searching of commercial databases when appropriate; and (6) interlibrary loan and document delivery of materials not held by the university. Areas to be considered in the budget are then identified and discussed. Descriptions of some of the experiences of UREAD in the areas of delivery and the research process conclude this paper. The second paper describes the distance education program and the evolution of UREAD services during its three years of operation with emphasis on bibliographic instruction. It is noted that, at the end of the first year, document delivery took precedence over travel to remote sites by the Instructional Support Librarian, and the following instructional materials were developed for independent student use: two Library Videos, a Library Guide, and Citation Lists. A discussion of the ways in which these materials are used and their effectiveness concludes this paper. (BBM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"Bridging the Distance with UREAD Off-Campus Library Services"

and

"U.READ: Alternatives to On-site Bibliographic Instruction"

Susan E. Cleyle

ED346856

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Susan Cleyle

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

IR054048

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"Bridging the Distance with UREAD Off-Campus Library Services"

Saskatchewan is a prairie province that extends over two hundred and fifty thousand square miles but has less than a million people. This population is primarily a rural one, with less than one third living in the two major cities. This demography has encouraged the delivery of distance education for post secondary education for many years. The two universities and community colleges have extensive programming designed for the rural population. Academic library support at the University of Regina was for many years a reactive service; information was provided when the library was approached. This consisted of sending books to remote sites as well as helping individual students with assignments. In the Fall of 1988, the Government of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina provided the funding for UREAD ("U"niversity of "R"egina "E"ducation "A"t a "D"istance) off-campus library service.

In the past three years, this service has grown and is now considered an essential component in the delivery of quality off-campus classes at the University of Regina. This paper will deal with the implementation of this program, with relation to the issues that would be of concern to other institutions considering developing a library service off-campus. The areas to be covered are:

Background Reading

Defining the Client and Service Base

Mandate

Budget and Delivery

Research Process

Background Reading

It is always a worthwhile first step in the implementation of any service to review how other libraries have implemented their individual programs. Library professional journals have documented many off-campus library programs. An excellent bibliography on the topic of off-campus operations is "Library Services for Off-Campus and Distance Education: An Annotated Bibliography" (Latham, 1991). Although all three authors are Canadian, this bibliography is certainly international in scope. One other publication, or series of publications to consult is the "Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings". Held every two years and sponsored by Central Michigan University, this conference produces discussions that are timely and practical.

Several countries have developed guidelines and/or standards for the provision of off-campus library services. In North America, the guidelines to check are by the American College

and Research Libraries, "ACRL Guidelines for Extended Campus Library Services." These guidelines do not offer specifics but: "are designed to outline direction, support a process, stress overall coordination and to support the educational objectives of the extended campus program. " (ACRL,1990 354) Areas such as management, finances, personnel, facilities, resources and services are discussed and some of the more popular options are outlined.

A strong background will make the next two steps of defining the client base and implementing, an exercise in adaptation, not invention.

Defining the Client and Service Base

Before any new library program can be implemented, it is important to determine how many will be served in the off-campus library service. Areas to review include:

1. Which individuals are considered off-campus or extension students (e.g. those taking classes on-campus but live outside the community)?
2. How many classes are considered off-campus?
3. Are there affiliate institutions or special agreements with other institutions whose students would qualify as off-campus?

4. What subjects (including levels) are being delivered off-campus?
5. How many students, faculty and instructors in total will be served?
6. What is the make-up of the student base (single parents, mature students, high school graduates, etc.)?
7. Should all students in the above programs qualify for off-campus library services? (e.g. graduate students)

Based on the total number of people who qualify to be served, the library can now consider the most feasible and cost-efficient method of supplying library materials. Is it better to supply resources taken from the collection on-campus or will small collections of books be sent to off-campus locations? There are advantages to each option. If the client base is to be served from an off-campus collection, the client will have access to a collection of materials to answer their assignments and therefore the library service would emphasize developing these collections and not answering subject requests to be filled by the on-campus library. UREAD made the decision to serve its off-campus client base out of the main on-campus collection. The diversity and level of the classes being offered would have required an extensive book budget to purchase all the needed materials. Security of off-campus collections could not be assured as many classes were offered in locations used for more than just UREAD classes. Because access was the top

priority there was also a concern that these collections may have very restrictive hours in the evenings. It was felt that if a modest book budget supplemented heavily used areas, then off-campus students would be better served to compete with on-campus students compete with on-campus studen

Mandate

Involved with the question of who and how this population will be served by the library, the question of why invariably arises. Having a clear direction of the primary purpose of this service will help to focus the implementation and to keep the goals of the service in sight. Stated in UREAD's Policy Manual, the goals are clearly defined: 'The primary mandate of UREAD is to make off-campus library access "as equal as possible" to the services offered on-campus' (p.4). Equal service is a primary concern for off-campus programs. If all courses, whether they are off-campus or on-campus are given the same credit value, then access to library resources should be made as equal as possible. The difference, of course would be that off-campus students are denied "hands-on" work with the reference resources of a research library. But the same credit value deserves the same library base.

Based on this goal, as well as how the service will be provided, UREAD determined what services it would offer. They are:

-specific books and documents
-photocopies of periodical articles
-thematic/subject searches
-reference/information queries
-computerized searching of commercial databases when appropriate
-interlibrary loan and document delivery of materials not held by the university

Budget and Delivery

Budget

Once the who, what, where and when (during semesters) have been determined, the final question is "how much". Areas to be considered include:

- Staff
- Communications (Toll-free Line, Phone, Fax)
- Instructional Activities
- Resources
- Method of delivery (Postage, Courier)

- Equipment
- Supplies

Staffing will be the largest portion of this budget. A Coordinating Librarian is essential. Developing, coordinating, as well as travelling to the off-campus sites requires a professional background for the administrative concerns and instruction level required. As for other staff, it may be worthwhile to note the following. In 1990/91, each semester UREAD received over 500 requests for information. Approximately 50% were subject in nature, requiring 1-3 hours to complete. Support staff included two full-time upper level library assistants who filled the majority of the subject inquiries. Student Assistants are also required to conduct retrieval and other basic tasks such as packaging, photocopying and mailing. Based on this experience and taking into consideration the types of inquiries expected, staffing could be estimated as follows: one support staff member for every 200 requests per semester; one student assistant per staff member conducting subject inquiries. It may be difficult in the first semester of operation to estimate the number of requests to be received, however, reviewing the questions asked at the client and service base stages alert you as to what to expect.

Communication concerns depend on the primary method of taking requests. If a toll-free number is the preferred method, then the option of have a 1-800 number that is only one-way (can only receive calls cannot make calls) may be a cost saving option. UREAD has such a line, with additional monies to utilize the WATTS line already in place to call back clients if necessary.

Instruction Activities includes many things. Travel for the Coordinator may fall into this area. Bibliographic Instruction is a major component of library services provided on-campus and should not be ignored in an off-campus environment. Money for travel should be included based on the guidelines established at each particular institution. The types of instruction to be provided will be discussed later.

Printing and duplicating of promotional materials is a major cost. UREAD sends a brochure as well as library guide to each off-campus student. Posters are sent to sites that offer classes and several special forms have been developed exclusively for this service.

Resources includes adding or developing a collection. If the service is to utilize the on-campus collection and the same classes are offered on-campus as those to be offered off-campus, then the budget allocation will not have to be as

large as it would if developing a unique off-campus collection.

The last budget concern is postage. UREAD decided to utilize Canada Post to deliver its information packages. In order to ensure the return of materials and to make services "equal", UREAD uses a pre-paid return mailing label. The cost is minimal with the postal office and service is above average. Within Saskatchewan, the mail is delivered at the very outside, in one week.

One final concern regarding budgets is flexibility. It is important in this type of service to be cautious with the first few budgets and request more than the projected demand. UREAD underestimated the number of requests that would be received in the first year of operation. Fortunately, there was room within the budgets to cover additional telephone, mail and staff costs. It would be disastrous to not be able to have adequate resources to cover client demand. All options in this instance are unpleasant: discontinue service, limit service or seek assistance from other areas of the library, putting an added strain on their budgets. If the money is not used to answer inquiries then it could be directed towards service enhancements such as videos, cd/rom indexes, books, etc.

Delivery

Now all the players are in place, the next step is to implement the service. When the phone rings, what happens? The UREAD experience may best explain some options for filling requests. Taking requests over the telephone is a true talent. UREAD has developed a request form. All vital information is documented: Name, mailing address, phone (day), and the student number. The student number is important for two reasons: to verify that the student is registered with the University, and secondly to provide an account number so students may be charged for any costs incurred. The class number is also noted for statistical purposes and as a second check that the client is indeed off-campus.

Requests are also received via fax from some of the institutes located off-campus who have a supply of special UREAD request forms. These are more detailed than the ones used on the phone. They ask the client to think about what they are interested in and provide as much information as possible. UREAD purchased two fax machines in 1988 and located them in two sites. Since this pilot project, fax requests have increased. It is also a valuable source to relieve pressure from the toll-free line.

Few requests are received via the mail which are usually from clients who have a series of titles they would like. To translate this list over the telephone would take a long time and clients are usually encouraged to use the mail system.

The majority of requests received are for subject information. UREAD consults the monograph collections, periodical articles and government documents. Once the search is complete, materials are gathered and mailed. The process of delivery has been streamlined extensively by using several forms (See Appendix), a subject index of past requests, as well as a subject file. These lower turn-around time remarkably.

All the steps of the delivery process have been documented in the UREAD Policy Manual. A policy manual is a necessary addition to any new service, in a library or not. "It serves to provide staff with a ready compendium of information concerning policies and procedures in order to insure a uniform standard of service of the highest possible quality consistent with available resources." (1988 4) It also serves as a training manual for any new staff member.

Research Process

The UREAD service provides for the off-campus community the library resources they would otherwise be denied. It also removes a very important component of a university education from the shoulders of these students. The research process, or the act of obtaining appropriate materials is now done by UREAD. UREAD provides the documents and/or books but in so doing has completed the research. This issue has been of concern to UREAD since the service began. As a result, alternatives have been implemented to get students involved in the research process.

The first alternative was to develop a video. The production took place in the summer of 1990. The video is divided into two parts. The first describes for the viewer the many different resources available in the Main Library on-campus. It is a walking tour of the various departments and services. Students are able to appreciate that it takes time to utilize and obtain all the information on a topic. The second part of the video outlines how students can access the materials housed in this library for their own purposes. It makes no attempt to describe in detail the research process. It is simply a visual alert to the fact that this process is followed when the information is requested. Awareness is key in this type of situation. It may be

totally out of the client's control to change their geographical location to be able to partake in the process, but if the understanding is there that it exists, then it is possible to work the material at hand (e.g. noticing the citations at the end of a journal article and knowing that those references exist, can be obtained and may indeed be relevant to the development of their own research).

UREAD developed a library guide to be used in conjunction with the videos. It takes the client through the research process of looking for monographs and journal publications and putting the material together in a paper. The guide is intended to be an awareness tool, to instruct the client that a structured process takes place when a request for information is made. The guide is also useful for the client who wishes to go to a library or resource centre to obtain their own materials. It provides a starting point as well as directions on how to use the very basic resources.

The third device is the provision of citation lists, an idea which came from Central Michigan University. This is very important in that it places the onus of selection back on the shoulders of the client. Several cd/rom and print indexes as well as the library's automated catalogue are searched. Clients are sent the printouts and asked to select the entries they would like to see in complete form. Although the client has not learned the process of getting

the list, they are involved in the decision process as to what materials they wish to see. Central Michigan had the idea to send out printouts with coversheets to explain how to read the printouts. UREAD has developed five such sheets which have worked very well.

A quality off-campus program requires quality support services. Because the "fear factor" is a large concern with off-campus students who are not familiar with "campus culture", it is important for support services to be sensitive to their needs. UREAD has endeavoured to deliver a quality service, while being sensitive to the needs of the client. It is this combination that allows UREAD to complete the circle of an equal off-campus education.

"U.READ: Alternatives to On-site Bibliographic Instruction"

By

Susan E. Cleyle
Instructional Support Librarian
University of Regina Library
Regina, Saskatchewan

The Univertsity of Regina is a mid-size Canadian univeristy located in the prairie province of Saskatchewan. This province comprising of approxiamately one million people is for the most part a rural area. People live in small towns or on their family farms. The major urban areas, Saskatoon and Regina both have univeristies. A Community college network provides academic education to the rural communities and the univeristies have for decades played an intregal role in the delivery of distance education to these individuals.

At the Univerisy of Regina, several methods of distance education are employed. Approxiamately 2600 students, faculty ,and instructors particpate in classes given on-site, or via video-conferencing. The SCN network (saskatchewan Communications Network) is a crown corporation which works with both universities to deliver approxiamately six classes to potenitally 50 locations. All totaled, approxiamately 150 classes are offered, from introductory univeristy courses to graduate level education classes.

Many of these classes fall into the middle category; they are upper level classes offered to Socail Work, Human Justice, Native studies and teacher education students. These classes are for credit and students are expected to complete the same requirments as their on-campus counterparts. Therefore, access to academic library suuport is imperative for these off-campus students.

In the fall of 1988, the government of saskatchewan addressed this need for library services, by providing in a distance education grant to both universities money for the provision of libarray services. The Univeristy of saskatchewan had been providing a distance education service for their students for some time , however, the libraries at the Univeristy of Regina had only been meeting the needs of off-campus students who had been approaching the libtrary themselves. At this stage, the library became proactive instead of reactive.

Since no program had ever been in place before this time, as Instructional Support Librarian, I was able to build the U.READ service from the ground up , to best serve the present needs of the University distance education program. a Literature survey, a toll-free numebr, and a draft brochure marked the starting point for the service that has grown 65% in its second year of operation. A small collection of books designated as extension were available. These were sent to instructors to distribute to their classes. By 1988, many of these books, approxiamately 200 in number had gone missing were out of date and not applicable to the classes now being offered. A small collection development appropraiation had been available in the grant allocation, but not enought to bring this collection up to scratch. Space was also a facor, and none was available to house and expanding extesnion collection. Therfore, the decision was made to enhance the existing collection to duplicate popular topics and purchase copies of books usually purchased by affliaited libraries (ie. the Sastchewan Indian Federated College Library is the primary collector of Native Studies). The Main Library on campus woudl be the primary source of information with the edcaution library service serving these students.

The University of Regina offers an extensive distance education program. About 150 courses are offered off-campus every year, on site and via videoconferencing. Approxiamately 2600 students, faculty and instructors are registered with the University of Regina and six affiliate institutions. Prior to 1988, library support for these classes consisted of answering a few individual inquires and sending packages of books to remote sites. A modest extension collection was kept in the Main library but by the mid 1980s it had become dated was virtually useless.

In the fall of 1988, the University Library became an active participant in the delivery of distance education classes. It introduced a centralized library service called **U.READ** (**U**niversity of **R**egina **E**ducation at **A** **D**istance). The primary mandate of this service was and still is: " to supply equal library services for the off-campus population." The provincial library system in the past had been supporting this client base and their interlibrary loan resources were heavily burdened with University requests. With the U.READ program, the University of Regina Library was finally able to assume responsibility for these clients.

A toll-free number is the main avenue for students to request materials, information and/or assistance with papers and other class work. The decision was made in 1988 to have U.READ utilize the on-campus collection, instead of building an off-campus collection. This choice has shaped the way U.READ provides bibliographic instruction and it is worth explaining the reasons behind it. Angel and Budnick note

that separate collections are expensive and would not supply adequate resources for the off-campus population. 1 Cost was a major reason for keeping a centralized collection but space as well as the variety of classes being offered solidifed the decision to conduct the program utlizing the on-campus collection.

This move solidified U.READ's obligation to become a document delivery service first and to provide bibliographic instruction second. As the program has matured so has the commitment to bibliographic instruction and U.READ has endeavoured to overcome the challenges and frustrations of successfully delivering BI in an off-campus environment.

By not supporting an on-site collection, students have not been given the opportunity to peruse a collection and make their own selection. During the first year of operation, the Instructional Support Librarian travelled to sites and met with classes, describing the resources available in the local libraries and how these would be best served by those collections. However, the resources available in many of these libraries were at best inadequate. Sessions on the use of the University Library's microfiche catalogue were ineffective and of little use to the off-campus client. With limited resources available conduct the research process, bibliographic instruction became a promotion of the U.READ service.

After the first year, this type of travel virtually stopped. The number of requests had increased substantially and document delivery took precedence over travelling to remote sites.

Marie Kascus and William Aguilar have noted that it is the libraries role to facilitate independent learning and this has not been forgotten 1 Since the experience of the first year, U.READ has endeavoured to facilitate this independent learning with bibliographic instruction tools designed to be used without the need for an on-site visit by a librarian. U.READ has worked hard to place the onus of selection back on the remote users shoulders and this has taken three avenues: a Library Video, a Library Guide and Citation Lists.

---

1 Michael R. Angel and Carol Budnick, "Collection Development and Acquisitions for Service to Off-Campus Students," Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory 10 (1986) : 17.
2 Kascus, Marie and William Aguilar, "Providing Library Support to Off-Campus Programs," College and Research Libraries 49:32 (Jan. 1988).

The University delivers three classes through the Saskatchewan Communication Network (SCN) and these videoconferencing classes are delivered via satellite to potentially 50+ sites. Each site is supplied with a television and VCR. It was felt that if the library went to the client with a visual record of what resources were available then U.READ would break the magic hat syndrome where "presto", a package is received in the mail after one phone call.

The result was two videos that display two things to the client: the incredible number of resources available in an academic research library and the process U.READ completes to determine the best possible materials for each individual request. A tour of the Main Library and the resources/services it provides for its client base describes for the client the wealth of knowledge available. This became the first video. The second video was an outline of the U.READ service and how clients can tap that wealth of knowledge, in effect displaying how U.READ goes through the research process. Although no bibliographic instruction of actual sources are discussed, it is felt that this video performs a very important function. It opens the world of knowledge to the client. It describes for the student the different TYPES of resources an academic library houses and how they are all accessible. The tour video has also served as an excellent "ice-breaker" for students participating in the library's introductory BI classes given on-campus. Although the videos were expensive to produce (an outside film agency was contracted), the expense has been justified.

U.READ goes into more detail about the research process with its library guide. Working on the visual description of the research process outlined in the vidoes, the guide follows step by step: "Defining the topic", "Looking for books and journals", and "Putting the paper together". In these steps the use of catalogues, indexes, LCSH, CD/ROM, OPACs are detailed. Only basic sources are discussed so not to discourage the client and to inspire them to at the very least mentally go through the steps.

The third piece of bibliographic instruction provided by U.READ is CITATION LISTS. U.READ staff complete searches of the OPAC, as well as the print and CD/ROM indexes pertinent to the topic requested. The lists from these sources are then searched to determine which are available in the library and the call numbers are noted. A cover page is attached to outline what is included in the lists. Clients are asked to mark the sources they wish to look at and to return the list to the U.READ staff to be filled.

These Citation Lists have successfully placed the onus of selection back on the shoulders of the client. They are basically permitted to browse the stacks for available materials and determine which would be suitable to them. The potential of these lists is tremendous. However, experience shows that lists can only be used for the first part of the semester. Mail time and due dates do not permit U.READ to use these lists after the middle of the semester. The key is to promote to the student to call U.READ at the beginning of the semester and with a conscious effort, it can be assumed that these lists will play a stronger role in filling requests.

Bibliographic Instruction offers the greatest challenge for any Distance Education librarian. The students' frustration is their distance and the handicap of being separated from the mainstream. The librarians' frustration lies in the knowledge that there is so much information available and off-campus students are not afforded the opportunity to get as involved in the research process as their on-campus counterparts.

The past three years have shown that off-campus students are truly imaginative in their methods for obtaining information: talking to local specialists, visiting nearby museums, or local social service agencies, writing to authors. One could argue that the distance education student is bringing the research process back to the "grass roots", by obtaining interviews and other primary information. Combine this talent with bibliographic tools and resources supplied from the University Library and the future Distance Education students may well become the better "educated" student.